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LETTER DATED 6 FEBRUARY 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ITALY TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On behalf of the European Union I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a statement by the Presidency of the European Union on the coup d'état in Sierra Leone.

I should be grateful if you could have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) F. Paolo FULCI
Ambassador

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Annex

[Original: English and French]

Statement on the coup d'état in Sierra Leone, issued on 24 January 1996 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union

The European Union was concerned to hear that a coup d'état had taken place in Sierra Leone on 16 January 1996. This runs counter to the expectations of the international community, even more since the country is plagued, among others things, by a deteriorating humanitarian situation to the detriment of the civilian population.

The European Union also took note of the public commitment made by General Bio, Chairman of the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), to continue with the democratic transition process.

The European Union hopes that recent events will in no way compromise the holding of free and democratic elections, which are scheduled to take place on 26 February 1996. The European Union is convinced that a democratic system in which all political factions participate and a fully accountable civilian government which respects human rights, remain the best guarantee of stability and prosperity for the people of Sierra Leone. This, in turn, is an important element in the stability of the entire region of West Africa.

The European Union will continue to monitor the situation and expects that all necessary measures will be taken to enable the democratization process to go ahead according to the stated intention.

The continued support of the European Union for this process will be assessed in the light of progress made in this regard. The central and eastern European countries associated with the European Union and the associated countries Cyprus and Malta align themselves with this statement.